



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-18-0069-O

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We investigated an allegation that a PI (the Subject) submitted an NSF proposal with plagiarized text. Our review found substantial portions of unattributed, copied text. The Subject claimed that a prospective postdoctoral researcher (Postdoc) wrote the sections in question.

The Subject's university investigated the matter, but the Subject provided no evidence of the Postdoc's contribution or that the Postdoc even existed. The Deciding Official concluded that the preponderance of the evidence supported a finding of plagiarism against the Subject. The university gave the Subject the option of termination or resignation; the Subject resigned.

We reviewed the Subject's past proposals and found additional, substantial plagiarism in a previous NSF proposal, a previous proposal to another agency, and an article. Based on our review of the evidence, we concurred with the university's conclusion that there was no evidence that a prospective postdoc existed or had contributed to the proposal. Consequently, we concluded that the Subject was guilty of intentionally plagiarizing text in two NSF proposals. We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct; require RCR training and 3 years of certifications; and prohibit the Subject from serving as a reviewer, consultant, or advisor for NSF for 3 years.

NSF made a finding and issued a letter of reprimand. In addition, NSF:

- a. Required the Subject to certify completion of RCR training;
- b. Required the Subject to submit certifications and assurances to NSF for 3 years; and
- c. Prohibited the PI from serving as a reviewer, consultant, or advisor for NSF for 3 years.

This case is **closed** with no further action taken.